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RHMFSS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC
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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KIRF](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: PLATEAU STATE DEPORTS FULANI NOMADS

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter N.S. Pflaumer for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Embassy began receiving reports on May 7 that Fulani nomads were being forcefully evicted from Wase local government area (LGA) in southeastern Plateau state. Salisu Mohammed Lawal (protect), a program manager at a USAID-funded organization, told Poloffs that, starting in late April, Fulani herdsmen were removed from Wase LGA and deported to Bauchi, Katsina and Kebbi states, among other areas. He said that the deportations were carried out by armed military, police, State Security Services (SSS) and the National Security and Defense Corps (NSCDC).

¶2. (U) On May 8, local press reported that the Plateau state government insists that the recent deportation of Muslim Fulani cattle herders from villages in the Wase Local Government Area (LGA) was done to ensure security, and not based on ethnicity or religion. Speaking to journalists, the State Commissioner for Information, Gregory Yenlong, claimed that the state relocated the Fulani to their "places of origin" because he said they had arrived in trucks (rather than on foot) shortly after the November 2008 sectarian violence in Jos, and that this had alarmed local residents. According to the Daily Trust newspaper Yenlong said that local residents were fearful of the migrants because of "the ugly experiences of 1984 where similar migrants were accommodated and turned out to engage in armed robbery and banditry." He also said that migrants cause disputes over land use with local farmers. However, according to the Punch newspaper, the Fulani cattle herders, under the auspices of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (a Fulani organization concerned with the prevention and resolution of farmer-herder conflicts), are appealing their members' forceful removal from the state.

¶3. (U) According to THISDAY newspaper, The House of Representatives adopted a resolution on May 7 mandating an investigation of the forceful evacuation of Fulani from Wase LGA. The resolution followed a motion brought by Idris Ahmed (Action Congress - Plateau State) which argued that Plateau State's action contradicts Section 41 (1) and 42 (2) of the 1999 Constitution, which guarantees the right to freedom of movement and the right to freedom from discrimination. The House also advised Plateau State to cease any additional expulsion of Fulani pending the outcome of the investigation.

¶4. (C) Comment: There is much about this situation which remains unclear, and into which we are checking. We find the Plateau state government's attempt to link these expulsions in April to the violence in Jos last November to be implausible. Not only is Wase approximately 170 kilometers from Jos, but the violence in Jos was six months ago. Although tensions between nomadic Fulani cattlemen and the local agrarian populations in Nigeria's middle belt are historically high at the end of the dry season (as herders move farther south into the agricultural lands), this is the first instance of forced deportation of the Fulani herders from one part of Nigeria to another of which we are aware. End Comment.

¶5. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate Lagos.
SANDERS